

ROUTING

Top Secret 251

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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Saturday June 19, 1976

CI NIDC 76-144C

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NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION

Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

State Dept. review completed

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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Saturday, June 19, 1976.

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[REDACTED] The NID Cable is for the purpose of informing senior US officials.

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LEBANON

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[REDACTED] The joint US-UK convoy, scheduled to begin the evacuation of US citizens from Beirut, was postponed early today after last minute warnings by Palestinian leaders that they could not ensure the security of the convoy. We have no independent evidence that security conditions in the area have in fact deteriorated, and the Palestinians are probably trying to make political gains for themselves by drawing out the negotiations on the convoy's departure.

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[REDACTED] Palestinian leaders presumably hope they can prompt the US to abandon plans for a land convoy and instead use Beirut airport, which is now closed. Such a decision, the Palestinians believe, might lead to a dilution or elimination of Syria's military control of the airport and to an earlier introduction of the Arab League security force.

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[REDACTED] The British embassy in Beirut announced that another attempt will be made tomorrow morning. There are about 1,400 US citizens in Beirut, but only about 100 have signed up for evacuation.

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[REDACTED] //A British convoy arrived safely in Damascus yesterday. During the 10-hour trip, it was escorted by at least four different armed groups: a mixed Palestinian force, Libyans, Syrian-controlled Saiqa guerrillas, and Syrian regulars. The convoy came under fire once when it may have been caught briefly in a cross-fire between Syrian forces and Palestinian or Lebanese leftist groups.//

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[REDACTED] Fighting was generally at a low level yesterday as Syrian forces continued slowly to consolidate their hold in the Bekaa Valley and around Sidon and Tripoli where the Palestinians and leftists continue to hold out. The Syrians shelled Sidon again yesterday. Syrian forces also have begun to move south from the main Beirut-Damascus highway toward leftist leader Kamal Jumblatt's homeground.

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[redacted] In Beirut, Christian forces laid siege again to the Palestinian refugee camps Tall Zatar and Nabaa at the eastern edge of the city, but there was little fighting elsewhere in the capital.

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[redacted] Palestine Liberation Organization chairman Yasir Arafat, perhaps out of desperation, sent an urgent appeal to Arab leaders yesterday asking them to expedite the arrival of the pan-Arab security force in Lebanon. Arafat charged that there have been repeated efforts to delay the implementation of the Arab League's decision.

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[redacted] Both the PLO and Lebanese leftists also issued angry statements last night accusing Arab League officials of playing into Syrian hands by allowing Syria to perpetuate and even make legitimate its military presence in Lebanon. The two groups called on Arab leaders to insist, as a first order of business, on the complete withdrawal of Syrian forces; both rejected the idea of Syria participating at all in the League force.

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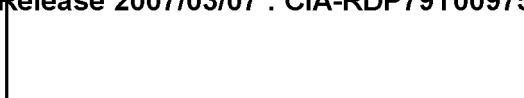
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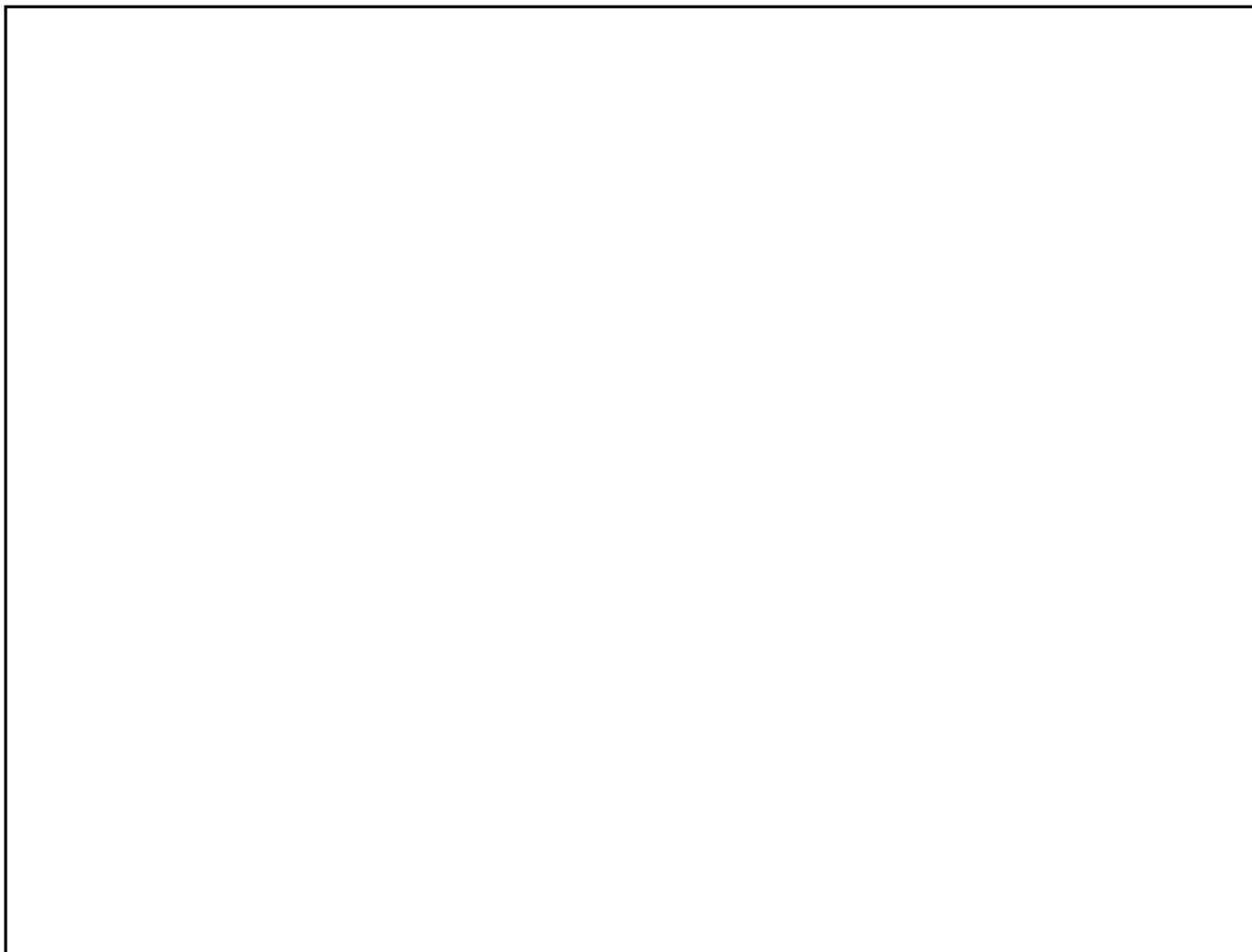
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USSR

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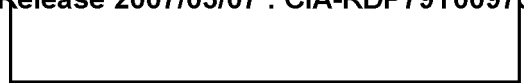
[REDACTED] General Secretary Brezhnev has maintained a busy schedule for the past two months. He has seemed in better form in his most recent public appearances than when he first returned to work in late April after a lengthy absence.

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[REDACTED] Brezhnev appeared to be in good spirits at the signing ceremony for the treaty on peaceful nuclear explosions on May 28 and during Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's visit in June, according to the US embassy. His color was good, his face firm--not puffy--and he seemed relaxed and at ease.

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25X1 [redacted] Television coverage of his public activities has resumed. In early May, only still photographs of his activities were occasionally shown on television newscasts, perhaps because of his uneven and often lackluster performances. [redacted]

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SOUTH AFRICA

25X1 [redacted] Racial violence continued for the third straight day in Soweto and spread yesterday to several other all-black townships around Johannesburg, South Africa. Press reports indicate that disturbances also occurred at at least two black universities near other South African cities. At the University of Zululand, near Durban, the administration buildings were burned and the homes of white teachers attacked.

25X1 [redacted] The government has stopped releasing casualty figures, but the death toll has probably passed 100. Over 1,000 others apparently have been wounded.

25X1 [redacted] A number of persons have been arrested, including several prominent black cultural leaders. Two members of the Christian Institute, a long time critic of apartheid, have been warned by police not to interfere in the situation. Sympathy demonstrations by white university students have been quickly quashed.

25X1 [redacted] Yesterday, the government banned all outdoor gatherings except sporting events. The ban is aimed at a planned prayer meeting in Durban that was called by several black cultural organizations.

25X1 [redacted] The Afrikaner press and the ruling National Party have defended police handling of the riots.

25X1 [redacted] The government has announced it will appoint a special commission to study the causes of the rioting, but there is no chance the disturbances will lead to significant changes in apartheid. Perhaps the most significant effect of the events of the past week will be to widen the gap between critics and defenders of apartheid.

25X1 [] Last night eight members of the UN Security Council
co-sponsored a resolution condemning the South African govern-
ment for resorting to "massive violence and killing." The emer-
gency session of the Council was called at the behest of the
25X1 three African members. The debate on the resolution will con-
tinue today. []

ITALY

25X1 [] The Italian election campaign ended yesterday, and
voters who have not made up their minds--10 to 20 percent ac-
cording to polls--will be reflecting mainly on what it would
mean to give the Communists a larger role in national politics.

25X1 [] During the final hours of the campaign, the Christian
Democrats sought to drive home their assertion that increased
Communist influence would pose too large a risk in terms of the
uncertainties that it would imply for Italy's democratic sys-
tem and ties to the West. Communist leader Berlinguer continued
to stress his party's professed commitment to democratic values
and to underline his differences with Moscow.

25X1 [] Efforts to sort out options after the election may be
further clouded by an election technicality that raises the pos-
sibility of a stronger showing for the left in the Chamber than
in the Senate. Approximately 5 million voters between the ages
of 18 and 25 are eligible to vote only for the Chamber and are
likely to give strong support to the left. The possibility that
the new Senate may be more conservative than the Chamber could
complicate the process of forming a new government because a
government must obtain a confidence vote in both houses of
Parliament.

25X1 [] On the eve of the election, most observers expect vot-
ing patterns similar to those of the regional elections a year
ago, in which the Christian Democrats, with 35.3 percent, held
a narrow lead over the Communists. The Socialists remained in
third place with 12 percent. The recent volatility of the Ital-
ian electorate, however, and the large number of undecided
voters place all projections in doubt.

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The Election Process

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[] Italians will be electing 630 deputies and 315 senators. Eligible voters cast ballots for both races during a single visit to the polls on Sunday or Monday. The minimum voting age is 18 for the Chamber and 25 for the Senate. Slightly more than 40 million citizens are eligible for the Chamber elections and about 35 million for the Senate.

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[] The number voting has only once fallen below 90 percent in the six preceeding postwar parliamentary elections. There is no provision for absentee ballots.

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[] The polls are open from 6 a.m. to 10 p.m. on Sunday and from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Monday. No results will be announced before the polls close on Monday. Fragmentary returns should be available by about 10:30 a.m. Monday (Washington time). The interior ministry will reportedly begin reporting national vote totals for the Senate--based on partial returns--by noon (Washington time) and for the lower house by 4 p.m. (Washington time). The final vote and seat distribution may not be known until the morning of June 22. []

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CYPRUS

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[] Turkish Cypriots go to the polls tomorrow to elect a president and an assembly for the "Federated Turkish State of Cyprus." The Turks maintain that this federated state, which was proclaimed after the de facto partition of the island in 1974, would be merged with a similar Greek Cypriot state in any final Cyprus settlement. The election campaign, however, has stirred new talk of full independence for the Turkish sector.

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[] Rauf Denktash, interim president and long-time leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, is likely to win the presidential contest by a substantial margin. The candidates of his center-right National Unity Party are unlikely to do as well in the race for the 40-member assembly, but Denktash still is likely to win control of the assembly.

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[] Throughout the campaign, Denktash's party has stressed the need for maintaining close ties to the Turkish mainland, and

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has even called for an eventual declaration of independence and integration with Turkey. Denktash has charged his opponents with advocating Marxist ideas and wanting to sell out to the Greek Cypriots.

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[] The opposition parties have focused primarily on domestic issues, charging the Denktash administration with failure to restore the economy of the Turkish Cypriot sector and with favoritism in the resettlement of displaced persons and reallocation of property. The opposition has paid lip service to Turkey but has sought to capitalize on the growing resentment by some Turkish Cypriots over the continued military occupation and the influx of Turkish mainlanders.

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[] A strong showing by the opposition parties in tomorrow's elections may well cause Denktash to refrain at least temporarily from pressing for independence. Any step toward this goal would seriously complicate the Cyprus problem and heighten tensions between Greece and Turkey. []

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ARGENTINA

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[] The killing yesterday of Argentina's federal police chief Brigadier General Cesareo Cardozo marked the fourth attack on a military man by leftist terrorists in the past week. //Two other officers were killed and a third drove off his assailants.//

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[] Cardozo was killed by a bomb after he entered his home; three family members with him were injured. Although neither the Montoneros nor the Peoples Revolutionary Army, the principal terrorist groups, has yet claimed credit for the assassination, it was almost certainly the work of one of these organizations. Both have been engaged in open warfare with the military and police for several years.

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[] The terrorists hope the violence will provoke such a harsh response from the security forces that the public will repudiate the government. There are "hard-line" officers who have been pressing President Videla to abandon his moderate approach and use stronger measures against the terrorists. The President has resisted thus far, but each additional terrorist act gives greater weight to the arguments of the "hard-liners."

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